

# JESSIE'S NEIGHBOR

BY LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON





"My roses were received with a cry of delight." — *Page 37.*



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LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON

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## JESSIE'S NEIGHBOR.

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THERE was a new-comer in the house into which Jessie Orkney looked from her chamber window. It did not occur to her that any one living in that house could be of much interest to her, least of all could have anything to do with her own fate or fortune; still they were such near neighbors that she looked over, now and then, with a sort of idle curiosity. The Orkneys were rich people. Mr. Orkney owned the great handsome house where they had lived ever since Jessie could remember. It was a spacious house, and it fronted on a stately street, where all the houses were elegant and substantial. But Jessie's own room was at the back. She had chosen it for herself when she got old enough to go out a little from under her mother's wing, because it looked into the garden.

You do not often find gardens in connection with city houses ; but back of the Orkneys was a small but very choice one. Such lovely flowers grew there ! A great bed was full of lilies-of-the-valley early in May, indeed, sometimes before April was over ; and then in June there were roses in greater variety, and with more fine names than I can stop to tell you. Jessie loved flowers when a child, as some children love their dolls, almost as if they were human. She had no brothers or sisters, and she had a fashion of making friends and companions of all sorts of things that came in her way. When she was a little toddling girl, hardly big enough to reach her hand up to a rosebush, she used to talk to her roses by the hour together, with a sweet and tender simplicity, as if perfectly sure that they understood her. When she got old enough to have her pretty chamber looking into the garden all to herself, she was happy indeed.

The room was fitted up with every daintiness that taste could suggest and money could buy ; for Jessie was an only child, and what was all the money with which papa Orkney's great pockets

were bulging good for, if not to make his only girl's life a dream of beauty? Back of the garden was a passage-way just wide enough for the carts that came with ice and vegetables. Beyond this were the small back yards of a street of humble houses, and then the houses themselves. The one of these just opposite Jessie's window had been occupied for several years by a man and his wife, whom Jessie used to say she had got tired of looking at. In appearance, they were commonplace, uninteresting people. The woman had a kind of aggressive neatness about her. She used to come out and attack the back doorsteps, and the path leading to the gate, as if here were an enemy whom she would conquer or die; and then go in, leaving everything spotlessly clean, but with a hue of depression, as if low in spirits. Sometimes the man would make his appearance outside, — a stolid, respectable, hard-working man he seemed, but with no interest in life except to get his day's work done, and no pleasure except to look solemnly out of the kitchen window, as he sat there resting after his task was over.



Jessie used to wonder, in the unconscious arrogance of her happy fortunes and her bright young beauty, what God made such people for, and why they did n't get tired of life and go out of it. They just got something to eat and to wear by working all the time, and enjoying nothing. Why would it not be just as well if they stopped eating and wearing and working altogether? At any rate, she wished they would move away, and some one come in their stead for whom she could entertain a more friendly feeling; for neighborliness was a sort of instinct with Jessie, and she liked to make friends of people just as she did of flowers and birds.

At last it seemed as if part of her wish was likely to be realized. Not that "Mr. and Mrs. Sobersides," as Jessie used to call them, had moved away. No, Mrs. Sobersides had just scrubbed off the steps as if she thoroughly enjoyed her victory over them, and Mr. Sobersides had been home to dinner, and sat for a few meditative moments at the kitchen window. But there *was* a new-comer. Better yet, it was a girl,—a girl who seemed about Jessie's own age, and who was apparently to have

the room precisely opposite hers; for she was moving about there, hanging up dresses in the closet, putting one little article here and another there, making home of the place, as girls do.

Here, at last, was something pleasant for Jessie to watch besides the garden, — a human flower, in bloom already, this wild, raw March day, before even the very first crocus had perked up its daring little head. For the new-comer had, so Jessie thought, a lovely aspect. She had soft, dark hair, not crimped after the fashion of the time, but waved as only Nature could have waved it, and making the loveliest setting for the clear, pale face, with its large, thoughtful, almost sad gray eyes. The girl wore the deepest mourning, and that helped to touch and attract Jessie's tender heart.

"I know I should like her," Jessie said, having run to her mother with the tale of her new interest, as she always did run to her mother with everything.

Mrs. Orkney smiled.

"You are quite sure?" she said. "Why? Be-

cause her eyes are gray, or because she wears such deep mourning, or because she is new?"

"All of them, perhaps," Jessie answered, laughing. "I'm so tired of just the same girls. All they think about is their new gowns and 'the brothers.'"

Jessie blushed as she spoke. "The brothers" was the phrase by which she was wont to indicate the young men, who formed so frequent a subject for discussion among her "set" of girls. These gentle youths were mostly brothers to one and another of the girls, and that may have suggested Jessie's designation for them. She was a truly delicate girl, this winsome Jessie, with a hidden fountain of romance somewhere in her nature which made all light nonsense about beaux, all playing at love-affairs, abhorrent to her. And over this fact mamma Orkney daily rejoiced. She was very proud of her one daughter, this happy mother, and you would see that she had some reason for being so if I could make a picture of the girl as she stood there in her careless grace.

She was almost sixteen; for she was born in

June, like her own roses, and with the next June would come her sixteenth birthday. She was tall and slight and blond, with a complexion of that perfect creamy white which grows radiant under gaslight. Her hair was gold,—not pale, but bright, and it was like a halo about her forehead,—a fine, fluffy, radiant halo, which meant hair-pins over night to be sure, but was none the less beautiful. Her eyes were not the washed-out, pale blue you see oftenest with such a complexion, but deep in color as English violets, and in moments of excitement, when the pupils dilated, looking perfectly black. Her mother used almost to tremble, sometimes, at the thought of the temptations and dangers which would beset this beautiful darling of hers, two or three years from now, when she should exchange school for society. But there was an innate purity and strength, an unspoiled simplicity about the girl, on which she counted much for her safety among the shoals and quicksands of fashionable life.

All through March and April Jessie rejoiced over her new neighbor as over a new friend. It

was so pleasant to look across at this youthful face, instead of at the blank window. Sometimes the new-comer was drawing, as it seemed, and sometimes sewing; but with pencil or needle she was always busy. Jessie saw her working when she went away to school, and when she came back again there was still the slight, girlish figure bending patiently over her task. Jessie wondered what she was doing; for she was full of curiosity, this bonny Jessie of mine. Not, be sure, of a meddling, prying curiosity, but of a wholesome, hearty, neighborly interest in other people's lives.

The very last of April Jessie went down, one afternoon, into the garden. It was time for the lilies-of-the-valley, she thought; and sure enough there they were, the dear, dainty white blossoms, all nestled under their sheltering green,—a wealth of beauty and perfume. Jessie bent over them with eager delight. They were old friends come back again. She gathered them carefully, a great handful of them, and then rose to her feet, and looked across the passage-way, up at her neighbor's window. The pretty girl in black had

opened it, and was leaning out, — perhaps to breathe the soft April air, or possibly to watch her; and Jessie smiled to think that maybe they had taken a mutual interest in each other. Jessie Orkney was very apt to act on her impulses. It was a good thing that they were almost always sweet and generous impulses. One came to her now, and she obeyed it at once. She held up her flowers, with a smile and a nod.

“Can’t you come down,” she cried, “and let me share with you?”

Instantly “Gray-Eyes” — for that was the name Jessie had got in the way of calling her — had left her window, and in two minutes more she stood at the garden gate, which Jessie opened for her.

“Come in, please. I am so glad to see you! I’ve known you so long from the window! I am Jessie Orkney, and I’ve been in the habit of calling you ‘Gray-Eyes;’ but I suppose you have another name?”

The new-comer laughed a merry, girlish laugh.

“Yes, I am Jeannette Stone; but everybody calls me Jennie. I’ve seen you, too, from the

window, and been glad to have you to look at;" and a little glint of light came into Jennie Stone's eyes, as if she were remembering a pleasure.

Meantime Jessie was dividing the lilies-of-the-valley.

"I wanted to give you half," she said, "because, you know, they are the first, and I shall like them twice as much when I think another girl is liking them too."

How the "other girl's" face brightened! Her gray eyes grew deep and tender, and a faint flush came into her cheek. Happiness is made of such little things—you know. She took the flowers, and smelt them eagerly, and then lifted her head.

"I don't think I'll try to tell you how I thank you," she said. "There are some things that can't be told—you know."

I suppose there is a sort of freemasonry between girls. At any rate they get acquainted with an ease and suddenness that seems to their elders almost miraculous. It was n't a week before Jessie and Jennie knew all about each other. Jessie found out that Mr. and Mrs. Sobersides, as she

still called them,—though she knew now they were Mr. and Mrs. John Jones, really,—were very good sort of people. They were Jennie's uncle and aunt; and now that Jennie was an orphan,—for her father and mother had both died within a few weeks of each other,—they had taken her home to live with them. Jennie's grateful eyes filled with tears as she told how good they had been to her. They would never let her pay her board, she said; and they were so glad to have her with them, since they had no child of their own.

“But I see you working all the time,” Jessie said, with that innocent little curiosity of which I have told you before.

“Yes, and that's for a purpose. I embroider things for a shop; my mother used to do that, and she taught me to help her. I draw my own patterns, and I am working very hard to get money enough ahead to take drawing-lessons, and fit myself to do something really good.”

The girls were in the garden when this was said. All their meetings had been there so far; but now Jessie cried, with one of those sudden impulses of



kindness that made her such a perpetually delightful surprise, —

“You must come up into my room, — you *must*. I have books full of all sorts of lovely designs, and maybe they would help you.”

She waited for no answer, but hurried on, Jennie following.

“You must speak to mamma, please,” she said, as they went upstairs; and, with the words, she led the way into the cosiest sitting-room, where sat a middle-aged lady, stately and handsome, but with kind, sweet eyes, and a smile like Jessie’s own.

“Mamma Orkney,” said Jessie, blithely, “here is my neighbor, Miss Jennie Stone. You know her by reputation; or, at least, I’ve reputed her enough to have you know her. I am going to take her to my room, to show her all my pictures.”

“And to talk her deaf,” mamma added, smiling; “but I am glad you have captured her at last. Miss Jennie, this is a very neighborly little daughter of mine. She has had her eye on you ever since you made your appearance at the opposite window.”

Jessie's room seemed to her guest like a very bower of beauty; yet it was only a large and pleasant room, fitted up according to Jessie's own fancy when she was fifteen. There was a blending of rose and blue all over it. The soft carpet bloomed with blue forget-me-nots and pink roses. The chintz with which chairs and lounges were covered repeated the same design, and so did the curtains at the windows. In an alcove there was a writing-desk, so prettily furnished that you longed to sit down at it and write letters to all your friends at once. In another recess was a good, roomy bookcase, and here were all Jessie's darlings. Hans Andersen, and Grimm Brothers, and the rest of the well-thumbed, dear old storytellers, had climbed to the top shelves now; and the lower ones were full of Scott, and Dickens, and Miss Thackeray, and, above all, of the poets. Light little stands were here and there,—on one a vase of ferns, on another a delicate glass full of the sweet lilies-of-the-valley. On a larger and stronger table were a portfolio of prints and several books of engravings. There was a full-length

mirror, in which Jessie could watch her own bright face, and the girlish grace of her light figure, if ever she were vain enough to find pleasure in them ; and everywhere were lovely and delicate ornaments, — here a Parian bust, there a bit of carving, again some quaint casket, — all the tasteful little trifles on which rich people are apt to waste money. Pictures hung on the walls ; and the very bed, with its fluted white draperies, looked like a sort of enlarged white lily, to which the girl, with her flower-like face, seemed naturally to belong.

An instant Jennie Stone stood on the threshold of this bower of beauty, taking in all the details. Then she drew a long sigh, — not a selfish, envious sigh, but one of intense pleasure and satisfaction, which could be no otherwise expressed. In a moment Jessie had her seated before the table of prints and illustrations. I don't know which girl was the happier, — Jennie, with her great gray eyes kindling over the beautiful designs which were meat and drink to her, or Jessie, looking on, full of such genuine delight in the pleasure she was giving.

Nothing would do but Jennie must take home for a study one of the books which pleased her most; and then, of course, that had to be returned; and then there were more lendings, and more returnings, until before May was over the two girls felt really well acquainted. Mamma Orkney fostered this friendship rather than discouraged it. She was wise enough to see the real worth of Jessie's neighbor; and she was glad that her daughter should be thus associated with a girl with some purpose in life more real and earnest than gowns and "the Brothers."

In June the Orkneys went away to the mountains. They went somewhat earlier than usual, for Mr. Orkney's head was troubling him, and he longed for a summer of rest and peace among the New Hampshire hills, where he used to live in his boyhood. It was the middle of June when Jessie said good-by to her neighbor. The roses were all in bloom, and the two girls stood among them when they parted.

"You know," Jessie said, "you are to come here and gather them, just as if they were your own;

indeed, they *are* your own, for I give them to you, and I want you, and no one else, to have them; and every time you gather a rose you must think of me."

"I could not help it, for they are your sisters."

"I used to think they were, really," said Jessie, smiling; "and all my life papa has called me his Rose in June."

Life was changed for Jessie's neighbor when the Rose in June was gone; and the sister roses that filled her room with bloom and fragrance went but a little way, after all, toward making up for the one she missed. One day a thought came to Jennie that went further toward consoling her than anything else had done. She would plan something on which she could work a little every day, — something for Jessie, and that would seem to make the days of absence less empty. She bent her brown head in a brown study, and at last her plan came to her. She would embroider Jessie a handkerchief, such as no one else could have. The design for it should be her own. It should be wrought with a wreath of roses, fit for the bonny

Rose in June, mingled with lilies-of-the-valley, such as were the occasion of their first meeting. She went down town and purchased linen cambric fine as gossamer, and daintiest floss, and began her task on her return.

All the summer long she worked on it, a little every day ; and the wreath grew, beneath her deft fingers, a thing of beauty.

It was late in October before the Orkneys returned. Jennie had one nod from over the way, and then Jessie's bright face appeared no more at the window. After a day or two came a message from Mrs. Orkney. Jessie was very ill ; the doctor called it typhoid, and therefore she could not ask Jennie to come to see her.

Five minutes afterward Jennie Stone walked with a white, resolute face into the kitchen, where her aunt was waging war against some imperceptible spots of dirt upon the painted walls.

"Aunt Martha," she said, very quietly, "Jessie Orkney is sick of typhoid fever, and I am going to see if Mrs. Orkney will let me help take care of her."

Mrs. Jones laid down her scrubbing-brush, and looked at her niece.

"I s'pose you know it's dreadful ketchin' — don't you?" she asked slowly.

"Yes, I know; and I know something else, too; and that is, that I love Jessie Orkney so well that if she should die without my having tried to do anything for her, I never should be happy another moment myself."

"Never's a long word," said Aunt Martha, dryly; "not that I mean to deny that the Orkney girl has been kind to you, and I do s'pose I should want to show my feelin' for her myself, if I was in your place."

"I suppose you would too," said Jennie, heartily; and then, in a moment, she was out of the door, and across to the other house.

Mrs. Orkney listened in surprise to her eager prayer that she might be allowed to help take care of Jessie.

"But, my dear," she said gently, "I have a nurse hired to help me, and I don't like to have you exposed to the infection."

"It might happen," Jennie urged, diffidently yet earnestly, "that she would like me about her, sometimes, better than the nurse. I am not strange to her, you know. I'm quite used to nursing. My mother was sick a long time, and I took all the care of her. If only I might just see Miss Jessie!"

"That you shall, certainly;" and Mrs. Orkney led the way to the pretty room where Jessie lay, with all her girlhood's accumulation of treasures around her. She turned her head wearily, as her mother entered, but when she caught sight of Jennie her face brightened.

"Oh, I thought you would come to see me," she cried, "and you'll stay now, won't you, till I get well enough to go down in the garden?"

Jennie fixed her great gray eyes on Mrs. Orkney's face. There were tears in those eyes, and their dumb pleading went further, perhaps, than even the girl's words:—

"I *may* stay, may n't I? You see she wants me."

And so it was settled.



Day after day, week after week, Jessie's neighbor took her full share of the nursing. The poor June Rose grew very ill indeed. Most of the time she was what the nurse called "out of her head," and then no one could please her so well as Jennie. Sometimes she would say, —

"Gray-Eyes, I used to know a girl who looked like you. Her name was Jennie Stone. She died last year; but I think you must be her cousin."

Sometimes Jennie used to take out the pretty handkerchief she was working, and which was almost done now, and try to set a few stitches. But always the tears would come, and make her eyes so blind that she had to put it away. I cannot tell you what anxious weeks those were, nor can you guess, out of the careless gladness of your young lives.

It was the 10th of December before the turning-point came, at which they shook hands with hope and parted company with despair. The fever had quite left the poor little girl, and she looked round with clear eyes on the watchers about her bed. Now, at last, she knew Jennie, and realized with

what zeal of self-sacrificing love her neighbor had come to pass her days and nights beside her. Not yet could Jennie go home ; Jessie wanted her more than ever, now. A hundred times a day she would say to her mother, "Oh, mamma, if I could but keep Jennie always!"

And after a while a plan grew in Mrs. Orkney's mind.

From time to time Jennie put her last touches to the delicate handkerchief. She could work on it joyfully now, for she knew whose eyes would brighten over it.

Christmas morning came at last. Jessie — a poor, pale, white rose, instead of the bright Rose in June who had gone away so gayly in the summer — was propped up in bed. She wore the softest wrapper of light-blue cashmere, with swan's-down for ruching round the neck and wrists, and her soft golden hair lay all about her lovely pale face like sunshine. Gifts upon gifts had been heaped up around her ; and at last Jennie handed her hers.

"It is not much," she said, "but I designed it

for you myself, and I used to work on it a little every day while you were gone. See, here are the lilics-of-the-valley that you gave me first, and the June roses which were your sisters."

"And it is the very prettiest thing I ever had in my life," Jessie cried, her eyes brightening; "something no one *could* have given me but you."

"After all, I can give you something better yet," Mrs. Orkney said, smiling, "if only Jennie will let me. I want to give you Jennie herself, for your constant companion. I want she should live here with you always, and share all your advantages; and, besides, she shall have special ones of her own, to cultivate this great talent for drawing which she has. Tell me, Jennie, will you let me have the pleasure of giving Jessie the gift she will like best of all?"

Jennie stood still, a deep flush glowing on her cheeks, her eyes bright as stars, yet full of tears just ready to fall. She looked from Mrs. Orkney to Jessie, and saw the fair, eager face, and heard the earnest cry, —

"Oh, don't speak too soon, Jennie, unless you are going to say yes!"

And then Jennie quite broke down, and sobbed out,—

"Oh, do with me just what you please,—only it's a great deal too good to be true!"

You want to know how it ended, you never-satisfied, dear reader? Why, things never do end in this life; they just go on. It all went on, as Mrs. Orkney had planned; and Jennie's talent really proved something wonderful. There was only one slight drawback to it all. The windows in the house opposite grew uninteresting again. Jessie had found her sister, but she had lost her neighbor.

## THE SURGEON OF THE DOLLS' HOSPITAL.

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**I**T was nearly four years ago that I first noticed, in one of the quiet side-streets in the West Central district of London, a sign over a door on which I read : —

DOLLS' HOSPITAL.

Operations from 9 A.M., to 4 P.M.

Whenever I passed through the street — and that was often, for it was a short cut to Mudie's, — the largest circulating library in the world, — I used to notice this quaint sign, and wonder, laughingly, who was the superintending physician to this place of healing for the numerous race of dolls.

I often thought I would go in and see the establishment ; but one is always busy in London, so, very likely, I should never have entered its door but for a casualty at my own fireside.

When I went downstairs one morning, I heard a sound of weeping, as bitter as that of Rachel of old mourning for her children. The mourner in this case was Mistress Brown-Eyes, as I was wont to call my friend's little girl.

She was a pretty child, this little Milicent; but you forgot to think about the rest of her face when you saw her wonderful eyes — soft and clear, yet bright, and of the warmest, deepest, yet softest brown. She had made her home in my heart, and so her grief, whatever it was, appealed at once to my sympathies.

“My darling,” I said, as I tried to draw away the little hands from before the sorrowful face, “what can be the matter?”

“Bella is dead!” and the sobs recommenced with fresh violence.

Bella was the best-beloved of a somewhat large family of dolls, — a pretty Parian creature, with blue eyes and fair hair. I had myself lately assisted in making a trunk of clothes for Bella; and I grudged sorely all my wasted labor, if she had come to an untimely end.

I looked at the dear remains, stretched out sadly upon a chair. Bella was evidently very dead indeed. Her pretty neck was broken, her fair, foolish head lay quite severed from her silken-clad body. Suddenly there flashed into my mind the thought of the dolls' hospital. I spoke cheerfully.

"Brown-Eyes," I said, "I think that Bella may recover. I am pretty sure that her collar-bone is broken; but I have heard of people who got well after breaking their collar-bones."

The child looked up, her eyes shining through tears, and said, with that air of grave, old-fashioned propriety which was one of the most amusing things about her, —

"It is a very serious accident. Do you think Bella *could* recover?"

"I hope she may; and I shall at once take her to the hospital."

"The hospital!" cried Mistress Brown-Eyes; "but that is where Mary Ann went when she had a fever. She was gone six weeks. Will my Bella be gone six weeks?"

"I think not so long as one week, if she can be cured at all."

In five minutes more I was in the street, with Bella in a basket on my arm. Her little mother had covered her carefully from the cold, though it was already May; and I felt as if I were in a position of grave responsibility as I hurried to the dolls' hospital.

A bell rang when I opened the door, and the oddest little person stood before me. At first I thought it was a child masquerading in long clothes; for she was not more than half the height of an ordinary woman.

But, looking more closely, I saw the maturity of her face, and realized that I stood in the presence of a grown-up dwarf, who might really have been taken for Dickens's Miss Mowcher, herself.

She was dressed in a long, straight gown of rusty-looking black alpaca, and her rusty-looking black hair was drawn straightly back from as plain a face as one often sees. It was a kind, honest face, however, and I liked the voice in which she asked how she could serve me. I explained my errand.



"Please to let me see the patient."

She spoke with as much gravity as if she had been the superintending physician of the largest hospital in London. I unveiled poor Bella, and the dwarf lifted her from the basket with grave tenderness.

"Poor little beauty!" she said. "Yes'm, I think I can cure her."

"Will the operation take long?" I asked, humoring her fancy.

"I should prefer that the patient should not be moved, ma'am, before to-morrow."

"Very well; then I will leave her."

Just at that moment I heard a voice call, "Sally! Sally!"

It was a well-trained, ladylike voice, but somewhat imperious.

"Yes, Lady Jane, I'll be there in a moment," answered the dwarf, whom I now knew to be Sally. Then a door opened, and the most beautiful creature I ever saw stood in it, looking in.

The hospital was a bare enough place. There was a great table covered with dolls,—dolls with

broken legs, dolls with punched heads, dolls with one arm gone, hairless dolls, broken-backed dolls, dolls of every kind, awaiting the ministrations of Sally; and dozens of other dolls were there, too, whom those skilful fingers had already cured of their wounds.

There was a shelf, on which was ranged the pharmacy of this hospital, — white cement, boxes of saw-dust, collections of legs and arms, wigs, every thing, in short, that an afflicted doll could possibly require. Then there were two or three wooden stools, and these completed the furniture of the apartment.

Standing in the doorway, Lady Jane looked as if she were a larger doll than the rest, — a doll with a soul. She seemed a lady's child, every pretty inch of her. I should think she was about twelve years old. She wore a blue dress, and a blue ribbon in the bright, fair hair that hung all about her soft, pink-and-white face, out of which looked two great, serious, inquiring blue eyes.

"I will be through soon, Lady Jane," Sally said quietly; and the girl turned away, but not before

I had taken in a complete picture of her loveliness, and had noticed also a somewhat singular ornament she wore, attached to a slender golden chain. It was so strange a vision to see in this humble little shop that my curiosity got the better of me, and, after the door had closed on Lady Jane, I asked, "Does she live here?"

"Yes 'm," answered Sally proudly. "In a way, she is my child."

I hesitated to inquire further; but I think my eyes must have asked some questions in spite of myself; for Sally said, after a moment,—

"You seem interested, ma'am, and I don't mind telling you about her. I saw Lady Jane first some eight years ago. A man had her who used to go round with a hand-organ. She was such a pretty little creature that everybody gave her money, and she was a great profit to Jacopo, for that was his name.

"It used to make my heart ache to see the little beauty trudging round all day on her patient feet. When Jacopo spoke to her, I've seen her turn pale; and she never used to smile except when

she was holding out her bit of a hat to people for money. She *had* to smile then; it was part of the business.

“I was sixteen, and I was all alone in the world. I had a room to myself, and I worked days in a toy-shop. I used to dress the dolls, and I got very clever at mending them; but I had n’t thought of the hospital, then.

“I lived in the same street with Jacopo, and I grew very fond of the little lady, as the people in the street used to call Jane. Sometimes I coaxed Jacopo to let her stay with me at night; but after three or four times, he would not let her come again. I suppose he thought she would get too fond of me.

“Things went on that way for two years; then one night, in the middle of the night, a boy came for me, and said Jacopo was dying and wanted me to come. I knew it was something about Jane, and I hurried on my clothes and went.

“The child was asleep in one corner. She had been tramping all that day, as usual, and she was too tired out for the noise in the room to wake

her. Jacopo looked very ill, and he could hardly summon strength to speak to me.

“‘The end has come sudden, Sally,’ he said, ‘the end to a bad life. But I ain’t bad enough to want harm to happen to the little one when I am gone. There will be plenty of folks after her, for she’s a profitable little one to have; but if you want her, I’ll give her to you. You may take her away to-night, if you will.’

“‘Indeed I will,’ I cried, ‘and thank you. While I can work, she shall never want.’

“Jacopo had been fumbling under his pillow as he spoke; and when I said I would take the child he handed me a curious locket. Maybe you noticed it at her neck when she stood in the door?

“He said, as nearly as I could understand, for it was getting hard work for him to speak, that he had stolen the child, but he had always kept this thing, which she had on her neck when he took her, and perhaps it would help, some day, to find her people.

“So I took her home. The next morning I

heard that Jacopo was dead, and the Lady Jane has been mine ever since."

"Have you always called her Lady Jane?" I asked.

"Yes 'm. There is a coronet on that locket she wears; and I know she must be some great person's daughter, she is so beautiful, and seems so much like a real lady."

"And so you've struggled on and worked for her, and taken care of her for six years, now?"

"Yes 'm, and I've thanked God every day that I've liad her to take care of. You see, ma'am, I'm not like other people; and it was a good fortune I could n't look for to have a beautiful child like that given into my arms, as you might say. It was all the difference between being alone and with no one to care for, and having a home and an interest in life like other women.

"I gave up working in the shop when I took her, for I did n't like to leave her alone. I was a good workwoman, and they let me take work home for awhile; then I opened the hospital, and I've done very well. Lady Jane has been to

school, and I don't think if her true parents met her, they would be ashamed of her."

"Do you ever think," I said, "that they may meet her some time, and then you would lose her for ever?"

"Yes, indeed, I think about that, ma'am; and I make her keep the locket in sight all the time, in hopes it might lead to something."

"In hopes!" I said, surprised. "You don't want to part with her, do you?"

I was sorry, instantly, that I had asked the question, for her poor face flushed, and the tears gathered in her eyes.

"O ma'am," she said, "if I stopped to think about myself, I suppose I should rather die than lose her; but I *don't* think of any thing but her. And how could I want her, a lady born, and beautiful as any princess, to live always in a little room back of a dolls' hospital? Would it be right for me to want it?"

"No; I think God gave her to make a few of my years bright; and when the time comes, she will go away to live her own life, and I shall live

out mine, remembering that she *was* here, once ; and harking back till I can hear the sound of her voice again ; or looking till I see her bright head shine in the corner where she sits now."

Just then the bell rang, and other customers came into the hospital, and I went away, promising to return for Bella on the morrow.

I walked through the streets with a sense that I had been talking with some one nobler than the rest of the world. Another than poor Sally might have adopted Lady Jane, perhaps, tended her, loved her ; but who else would have been noble enough to love her, and yet be ready to lose her for ever and live on in darkness quite satisfied if but the little queen might come to her own again ?

I comforted Mistress Brown-Eyes with a promise of her " child's " recovery, and I went to a kettle-drum or two in the afternoon, and dined out at night ; but all the time, amidst whatever buzz of talk, I was comparing the most generous persons I had ever known with the poor dwarfed surgeon of the dolls' hospital, and finding them all wanting.

I went for Bella about four the next afternoon.



I wanted to get to the hospital late enough to see something of the little surgeon and her beautiful ward. I purchased a bunch of roses on the way, for I meant to please Sally by giving them to Lady Jane.

I opened the door, and again, at the ringing of the bell, the quaint little figure of the dwarf surgeon started up like Jack-in-the-box.

"Is the patient recovered?" I asked.

"The patient is quite well;" and the surgeon took down pretty Bella, and proudly exhibited her. The white cement had done its work so perfectly that the slender neck showed no signs of ever having been broken.

I paid the surgeon her modest fee, and then I said, "Here are some roses I brought for Lady Jane."

Sally's plain face beamed with pleasure. "It's time to stop receiving patients for to-day," she said. "Won't you walk into the sitting-room and give the roses to Lady Jane, yourself?"

I was well pleased to accept the invitation. The sitting-room was as cosy as the hospital itself was barren of attraction. I really wondered at the

taste with which it was arranged. The hangings were blue, and two or three low chairs were covered with the same color; and there were pretty trifles here and there which made it seem like a lady's room.

My roses were received with a cry of delight; and, while Lady Jane put them in a delicate glass, Sally made me sit down in the most comfortable chair, and then she asked her ward to sing to me.

The girl had a wonderful voice, soft and clear and full.

When she had done singing, Sally said, "I have thought sometimes that, if no better fortune comes, Lady Jane can sing herself into good luck."

"*I* count on something better than that," the little lady cried carelessly. "When I 'come to my own,' like the princesses in all the fairy tales, I'll send you my picture, Sally, and it will make you less trouble than I do. It won't wear out its gowns, nor want all the strawberries for supper."

Sally did n't answer; but two great tears gathered in her eyes, and rolled down her cheeks.

Lady Jane laughed — not unkindly, only child-

ishly — and said, “Never mind. Don’t cry yet. You’ll have time enough for that when it all comes to pass. And you know you want it to happen ; you always say so.”

“Yes, yes, dear, I want it to happen,” Sally said hastily ; “I could n’t want to shut you up here for ever, like a flower growing in a dungeon.”

“A pretty, blue-hung dungeon, with nice soft chairs,” Lady Jane said pleasantly ; and then I got up to go.

Had this beautiful girl any real heart behind her beauty ? I wondered. If the time ever came when Sally must give her up to some brighter fate, would it cost the little lady herself one pang ? Could she be wholly insensible to all the devotion that had been lavished on her for all these years ? I could not tell ; but she seemed to me too light a thing for deep loving.

I carried Bella home to Mistress Brown-Eyes, who received her with great joy, and with a certain tender respect, such as we give to those who have passed through perils. I stayed in London till “the season ” was over, — that is to say, till the

end of July ; and then, with the last rose of summer in my buttonhole, I went over to the fair sea coast of France.

It was not until the next May that I found myself in London again ; and going to renew my subscription at Mudie's, passed the dolls' hospital. I looked up at the quaint sign, and the fancy seized me to go in.

I opened the door, and promptly as ever, the dwarf surgeon of the dolls stood before me. It was nearly four o'clock, and the hospital was empty of customers. Nothing in it was changed except the face of the surgeon. Out of that always plain face a certain cheerful light had faded. It looked now like a face accustomed to tears. I said, —

“ Do you remember me, Dr. Sally ? ”

A sort of frozen smile came to the poor trembling lips.

“ Oh, yes 'm. You 're the lady that brought the rose-buds to Lady Jane.”

“ And is she well ? ” I asked.

“ I *think* so, ma'am. Heaven knows I *hope* so ;

but the old days when I *knew* are over. Won't you come into the sitting-room, please?"

I wanted nothing better for myself, and I felt that it might ease her sad heart to break its silence; so I followed her into the familiar room. It, at least, was unchanged. The blue hangings were there, and the low easy-chairs, and the pretty trifles; and yet, somehow, the room seemed cold, for the beauty which had gladdened it last year had gone for ever.

"Will you tell me what happened?" I asked; and I know the real sympathy I felt must have sounded in my voice.

"It was n't long after you were here," she said, "a lady was driving by, and she saw my sign. She sent her footman to the door to see if the place was really what that said; and the next day she came in herself and brought a whole load of broken toys. She said she wanted these things put in order to take into the country, for they were favorite playthings of her little girl's.

"I turned then and looked at the child who had come in with her mother. I can never tell you

how I felt. It was as though Lady Jane had gone back six years. Just what my darling was when she came to me, this little girl was now,—the very same blue eyes, and bright, fair hair, and the pretty, pink-and-white face.

“Just at that moment, Lady Jane came into the hospital, and when the lady saw her, she stood and gazed as if she had seen a ghost. I looked at the lady herself, and then I looked at Lady Jane, and then again at the little girl; and true as you live, ma'am, I knew it was Lady Jane's mother and sister before ever a word was spoken. I felt my knees shaking under me, and I held fast to the counter to keep from falling. I could n't have spoken first, if my life had depended on it.

“The lady looked, for what seemed to me a long time; and then she walked up to my darling and touched the locket that she wore on her neck. At last she turned to me and asked, with a little sternness in her gentle voice, if I would tell her who this girl was, and how I came by her.

“So I told her the whole story, just as I had told it to you, and before I had finished, she was

crying as if her heart would break. Down she went on her knees beside Lady Jane, and put her arms around her, and cried,—

“‘O my darling, my love, I thought you were dead! I am your mother—oh, believe me, my darling! Love me a little, a little,—after all these years!’

“And just as properly as if she had gone through it all in her mind a hundred times beforehand, Lady Jane answered,—

“‘I always expected you, mamma.’

“Somehow, the lady looked astonished. She grew quieter, and stood up, holding Lady Jane’s hand.

“‘You expected me?’ she said, inquiringly.

“‘Yes, you know I *knew* I had been stolen; and I used to think and think, and fancy how my true mother would look, and what my right home would be; and I always felt sure in my heart that you would come some day. I did n’t know when or how it would be; but I expected you.’

“‘And when will you be ready to go with me?’ asked the mother.

“ ‘When you please, mamma.’

“The lady hesitated, and turned to me. ‘I owe you so much,’ she said, ‘so much that I can never hope to pay it; and I do not like to grieve you. But her father and I have been without Jane so long, *could* you spare her to me at once?’

“ ‘That must be as you and she say, ma’am,’ I answered, trying as hard as I could to speak quietly. ‘I never have wanted any thing but that she should be well off and happy so far, and won’t begin to stand in her light now.’

“Then the lady turned to the little girl who had come in with her. ‘Ethel,’ she said, ‘this is your sister. She has been lost to us eight years, but we will keep her always, now.’ And then, with more thanks to me, she started to go away, — the stately, beautiful lady, with her beautiful girls, one on each side of her.

“They got to the door, and suddenly my darling turned, — O ma’am, it’s the best thing in my whole life to remember that! Of her own accord she turned and came back to me, and said she, —

“ ‘Don’t think, Sally, that I’m not sorry to say



good-by. Of course I can't be sorry to find my own mamma and my right home, but I'm sorry to leave *you*.'

"And then she put her arms round my neck and kissed me just as she had done when I took her home that night from Jacopo's, six years before; and then she went away, and the sunshine, it seemed to me, went out of the door with her, and has never come back since."

The poor little surgeon of the dolls stopped speaking, and cried very quietly, as those cry who are not used to have their tears wiped away, or their sorrows comforted.

I wanted to say that Lady Jane seemed to me a heartless little piece, who cared for nothing in the world but herself, and was n't worth grieving for; but I felt there would be no comfort for her in thinking that there had never been any thing worth having in her life. Far better let her go on believing that for six years she had sheltered an angel at her fireside.

At last, when I saw her tears were ceasing to flow, I said, "And when did you see her again?"

"Oh. I have never seen her since that day. I think she pitied me too much to come back and give me the sorrow of parting with her over again. No, I have never seen her, but her mother sent me five hundred pounds."

"And so she ought," I said impulsively. "It was little enough for all you had done."

Surgeon Sally looked at me with wonder, not unmixed with reproach, in her eyes.

"Do you think I wanted *that*?" she asked. "I had had my pay for all I did, ten times over, in just having her here to look at and to love. No; I sent the money back, and I think it must be that my darling understood; for, two months afterwards, I received the only gift I would have cared to have, — her portrait. Will you please to look round, ma'am? It hangs behind you."

I looked round, and there she was, even lovelier than when I had seen her first, — a bright, smiling creature, silken-clad, patrician to the finger-tips. But it seemed to me that no heart of love looked out of the fair, careless face. I thought I would

rather be Surgeon Sally, and know the sweetness of loving another better than myself.

"She is very beautiful," I said, as I turned away.

"Yes; and sometimes I almost think I feel her lips, her bonny bright lips, touch my face, as they did that last day, and hear her say, 'Don't think, Sally, that I'm not sorry.' Oh, my lot is n't hard, ma'am. I might have lived my life through and never have known what it was to have something all my own to love. God was good.

"And after all, ma'am," she added cheerfully, "there's nothing happier in the world than to give all the pleasure you can to somebody."

And I went away, feeling that the dwarf surgeon of the dolls' hospital had learned the true secret of life.

## SUNG IN THE TWILIGHT:

A STORY OF RICHARD WAGNER.

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THE sultry June day was wearing on. The heat was unusual for an English summer, and it seemed to rest upon everything like a palpable weight. Even the clamorous London sparrows were silenced by it. The noise of wheels grinding on the stone pavements when some provision-cart stopped at a neighboring back door seemed an impertinence to the hot stillness. To live at all, Hans Breydel thought, demanded more energy than fate had left him. He lay on a low couch in his "three-story-back" room, and panted restlessly with the heat. Six years in England had not cured him of his German expletives.

"Ach Himmel!" he groaned. "I grill! I stifle!"

Instantly his daughter came to his side. Minna Breydel was just sixteen. To her, England seemed home, for she came there a child of ten, just after the death of her mother; and she had grown into her sweet girlhood in the smoky air of the heart of London. She was a girl who made you think of a white lily, — so slender was she and so fair, — with her blue eyes, and her yellow hair, and the pale face, to which any sudden emotion called a flitting pink color as delicate as the tint of the apple-blossom.

She had no friends, except her father. Her life had been passed in London lodgings of the humbler sort, and her father had been parent, teacher, and companion, all in one. Hans Breydel was a disappointed man. He had fancied himself a musical genius long ago, and in his youth he had been a friend of Richard Wagner, and had hoped and dreamed and aspired with him. But either fate had been against Hans Breydel, or he had been mistaken in his early belief in himself.

Even in his own Germany he had achieved no shining success, though he was happy there, with

the wife of his youth and his love. But when she died, the quiet scenes among which they had lived together became insupportable to him. The old longing of his boyhood for a wider and more stirring life possessed him again, and he took his violin and his little daughter and went to England. But again in London he failed to find any brilliant opening, and he had never risen higher than to be second violin in an orchestra.

For the last three months his violin had been idle, and some mysterious illness had seemed to be sapping the springs of his life. Perhaps the illness had its root in his own discouraged heart, and meant hope deferred and turned into despair. At any rate, for three long months he had been the prey of this mysterious malady which sapped his strength, and beat down his courage, and turned him pale with unspoken fear.

His savings of the past had so far supported him and his daughter, but now he had come to the end of this moderate hoard. Hans Breydel himself did not know that the slender purse had dwindled to its last half-crown; but Minna knew it only too

sadly well. She had been brooding desperately over this state of things when her father's exclamation summoned her to his side.

"What should she do — what *could* she do?" she had been asking herself. Her one sole accomplishment was to sing; and she had never sung as yet for any one but her father. Her voice was not strong enough to sing in public, he had always said. In truth, he had been too jealously careful of his delicate blossom of a girl to contemplate for her a fate which would compel her to struggle with the world.

He had trained her very thoroughly, however, vaguely thinking that "if the worst came to the worst, she could teach — or something."

"Or something" is the stronghold of dreamers, but during those last three months it had seemed but a desperate refuge to Hans Breydel. And yet he did not guess that already "the worst" was at his door. That very morning the landlady had called Minna out, and asked for the last month's rent, which there was no money to pay.

"I don't want to be hard," the woman said, "and

you've always paid punctual up to now. I'll wait a week or two longer; but more than that I cannot say. I'm a poor woman, as lives by her lodgers."

"Oh, I'll get some money somehow," Minna answered; and then she had come back into the room with her father, and sat at the window watching the hot, sleepy children in the back street below,—watching them, yet taking no sense of anything, beset by the one awful question, What could she do to keep a roof over their heads; to give her father food and care until he should get better.

The glaring sunlight shone down on the heat-stricken, listless world. It seemed to shrivel up all hopes, all illusions; to force her to contemplate the bare and terrible facts of life. Where should she turn for aid or counsel? Her baffled thoughts seemed to go up and down purposeless on the wretched treadmill of her anxious questioning, till her father's exclamation broke the evil spell, and she hastened to him, glad of the interruption. She took up a fan and waved it to and fro, but that seemed only to make the musician nervous.



"Sit down," he said ; "sit down, dear heart, and sing. It may help me to forget the heat. And I want also to see what can you do."

The girl obeyed. Her fresh young voice rose on the heavy, heated air,—a soaring voice, clear and sweet, conquering for the moment her father's listlessness and discomfort.

"Lieber Gott," he cried, "hear her! It is a voice of silver. Yes, she shall sing herself into the heart of the world, and it shall be good to her, but not yet—not yet! Sing yet once more the song that mine old friend wrote for me. He is a great man now, that Richard Wagner, who loved me and whom I loved in the far, old days. Sing the song he wrote that day when, in the Black Forest, we had been glad together, he and I, and had talked about the future, which we thought would be all of success and of glory,—the song that he put our hopes and our dreams into—sing!"

A sudden thought flashed into Minna's anxious heart,—a hope so sudden that it almost made her breathless. A door seemed to open all at once.

"Father," she said, "he is in London, even now. Let me go to him! He loved you once; he will help you now."

"Help!" Hans Breydel cried hotly, raising himself in his bed as he spoke. "Help! I will have none of his help. We will help ourselves and each other. Shall I, who walked in the old days by Richard Wagner's side, grovel at his feet now, — I, who have failed, at his feet, who has succeeded? Not so, not so; but sing me yet once more his song, my heart's Minna."

And Minna sang. The clear, sweet voice uttered its cry of music, and one standing outside the door heard. When the song was over, Dr. Greenfield, who had been listening to it from without, came in, and made his visit to Hans Breydel. When he left, he beckoned Minna out, and spoke to her in the entry.

"He will never get well in this place," he said gravely. "He needs to be taken out of this hot air, this close little room. He needs a change; sea air, good food, all sorts of things that he lacks here."

At that Minna cried out impatiently, —

“Why not say he needs a dukedom, a palace? There is as much chance of it as of what you say he must have.”

“Yet it must be had, somehow. That voice of yours ought to help. I don't quite see the way yet; I must think. I shall come again to-morrow.”

When he had gone downstairs, Minna Breydel returned to her thoughts. He had said that voice of hers ought to do something. At any rate, it was their only hope. *What* could she do? She could not get scholars in a moment, and if she had them, how could she leave her father untended while she taught them? And yet she must, *must*, do something.

There was no hope of even a roof over their heads for more than a week to come; and food — how long could they exist on the single half-crown in her purse, to say nothing of all the luxuries her father's state demanded? Just then a hand-organ man stopped in the little back street under her window, and played some familiar air of the day; and suddenly the thought came to her that she

would go out by and by and sing ; and if, indeed, her voice were what Dr. Greenfield thought, it might be that some kind people would care to hear, and perhaps she might at least do as well as the hand-organ man, and get a few shillings to help them along for a little while ; and then perhaps her father would get better, and — who knew what ? Great Field of Conjecture, to which Youth is forever heir, how soon do we lose the key to your enchantments as the day of life wears on ! And yet Youth is after all right, and the unexpected is forever happening.

It was, altogether, a restless day for Hans Breydel. The song which Wagner had written for him when they were young together had carried him back through many a winding path to the old days, and again his heart beat with the old loves and hopes and ambitions. *She* came back to him from her far-off place, — the gentle wife he had loved so long and well, and who had been gone from him now, so many silent years.

He forgot the changes and disappointments of the empty life since, and dreamed again the old

dreams. Meantime, Minna dreamed also, sitting beside him,—dreamed her young dream of to-day; how she would sing to some purpose at last, and how perhaps some manager would hear her,—she had heard of Rachel,—and she would be chosen of fortune and beloved of fate in the future; but first of all she would be able to help, in the present, this dear father of hers, and turn the dark days bright.

And so the hours wore on, and night drew nigh. She gave her father some beef-tea, and for her own supper she made a bit of bread do duty. And at last the twilight fell,—the long summer twilight, that always seems so much longer in London than anywhere else. And seeing her father drowsily inclined, she asked him if she might go out for a breath of fresh air. Had he been less sleepy he would have been surprised at this unusual request; but, as it was, he gave his consent, and having exacted a parting promise from the landlady to look after him now and then, Minna Breydel started out, to test, for the first time, the uncertain humor of the world.

Once out of the door, her heart began to fail her. How should she, how could she, raise her voice to sing—she, who had grown up in the shade, and had never, in all her life, sung for any other listener than her father? But from the very thought of that father she must gather courage. What joy it would be to help him!

Some impulse urged her to get quite away from home, and beyond the probability of meeting any familiar faces, before she began. She wandered on and on, until she came near Kensington Gardens. Once or twice she was about to lift up her voice, and was deterred by some gaze which seemed to her curious or impertinent. She paused, at length, before a pleasant house in a quiet street of Kensington. The drawing-room windows were open, and their soft white curtains stirred with the soft breath of the evening.

Who might be behind those curtains? What fate for her did they veil?

A star had risen and looked down at her from the far-off summer sky,—*her* star, she thought, shining with hope. They must be music-lovers

in the house, for some one struck, with the touch of a master, a few chords on a piano, as if to illustrate something that was said.

With the sound Minna's courage rose, and she broke the succeeding silence with an uncertain note. Then her voice grew stronger, and she sang: —

“Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?  
Why weep ye by the tide?  
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,  
And ye sall be his bride;  
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,  
Sae comely to be seen, —  
But aye she loot the tears down fa'  
For Jock o' Hazeldean.”

The tender sweetness of her voice seemed like a part of the gentle dusk. The low wind stirring the leaves, the cloud-like white wings scarcely moving across the blue, the faint breath of the dew-wet roses, all belonged to her, and she and they were as one. Behind the white curtains two men listened, — good comrades, who had been talking together of pleasant plans and pleasant memories.



"The tender sweetness of her voice seemed like a part of the gentle dusk."— *Page 58.*





"Hark!" cried one of them. "That voice — how beautiful! It is the soul of the twilight."

And then both men listened quietly till the song was over. There was a moment's silence, — and then, moved by a sudden impulse, the girl began to sing that other song which Richard Wagner had written for her father, — that song "of wonder and hope," full of present joy and future promise. Soft as love itself the voice arose, strong as hope it climbed toward heaven. The men heard it, and one of them — the one who had spoken before — reached out and grasped his comrade's hand.

"Listen! listen!" he whispered, and the two seemed hardly to breathe until the song was over. Then suddenly the elder of the two sprang from his seat, almost threw himself down the stairs in his hurry, and stood before Minna Breydel.

"Who are you?" he cried. "*I* wrote that song, — *I*! It was printed never. It was my gift to my heart's friend when we were young together. Who are you — *who*?"

"Minna Breydel," the girl answered gently.

“And your father — he is Hans Breydel?”

“Yes, he is Hans Breydel.”

“And I, girl, I am his friend of youth; I am Richard Wagner. I made the song that you have sung, — *I*. I have lost him for many years, my friend of youth. Is he, perhaps, dead? Why are you here — you alone — singing the song of youth and of love — the song that was sacred to him and me — in the streets of London? Ach Himmel! he is dead.”

“No, but he is ill, has been ill long, — ill and poor; and we had no more any money, and I came out to sing, in the hope that some one might find pleasure in my voice. And I sang that song because it was the song of friendship, and my father loves it — he and I love it — beyond all songs in the world.”

“He is ill, he suffers? Dear child, take me to him, and now!”

And the great musician called a passing cab. Upstairs he went, for his hat, and a word of explanation to his friend; and then, in the space of a moment, as it seemed, he and Minna were

upon their way. As they drove, Herr Wagner asked the girl countless questions, and before they reached their destination he was in possession of Hans Breydel's whole history. When they alighted, he said, —

“You shall show me the way, but *you* shall not speak. I will go in the first, and *I* will speak, and I will see if the friend of the old time shall know me.”

Together they climbed the stairs; and then Minna threw open the door of the three-story-back room, and motioned Herr Wagner to enter. Darkness had gathered, but no light had been lighted, and the sick man turned impatiently on his couch.

“Have you come at length and at last?” he cried. “Ach, but the time has been long. You should have fresh air enough by now.”

“It is I who come, — *I!*” said the deep voice from the doorway. “Hans, Hans Breydel, knowest thou me not?”

A cry of welcome burst from the sick man's lips.

“Richard, it is thou — *thou!*” and then, in a sterner voice, “but she has disobeyed me. I forbade her to seek thee.”

“She obeyed thee. She sought me not. She cannot be blamed. She but sang under my window, knowing not that it was mine, the old song of youth and hope and love, — the song I gave thee when we had wandered and dreamed and been happy together in the Black Forest, in the long-ago time. I remembered the old days, and I went down the stair, and found her on the pavement, with her face like the moonlight, and her voice that I think must be like the songs of heaven; and I asked how the song I had given thee could be on her lips, and she told me it all; and here am I, richer in that I have found again my old friend than in all else I have gained in London. Is the heart in thee unchanged for me also, Hans Breydel?”

And through the darkness the weak hand of Hans Breydel reached, and the strong hand of Richard Wagner clasped and held it, and the two friends were one again, as in the days of

love and hope and youth of which the song had sung.

The rest follows, as a matter of course. The highest, dearest right of love is to help the beloved; and Richard Wagner claimed that right. On the shore of the North Sea, across which German eyes can look from England toward the Fatherland, Hans Breydel spent the August and September days. And was it the breath of the sea, or the breath of hope that breathed into him new life?

At any rate he grew well again. And when the world went back to town, and entertainments for the winter began, it was not hard for him whom Richard Wagner recommended, and who was Richard Wagner's friend, to get such a position as he had never held before.

Thus came prosperity to the violinist and his daughter, — prosperity, and the fulfilment of long-delayed hope; and to-day, if you go to one of the prettiest houses in London, where Minna reigns as wife and mother, and Hans Breydel figures as proud grandfather, you will see, in the place of

honor over the mantel-piece, richly framed, the song that Richard Wagner wrote, that Minna Breydel sang, and before it, always, a glass of fresh pansies, the flowers of remembrance; since now the great musician has gone on, where the singers are immortal, and the temples are not made with hands.



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